



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

BOOK REVIEWS.

AUTHORITY, LIBERTY AND FUNCTION IN THE LIGHT OF THE WAR.

A critique of Authority and Liberty as the foundations of the modern State and an attempt to base societies on the principle of Function. By Ramiro de Maeztu. London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd.; New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916. Pp. 288. Price, 4s. 6d. net.

Mr. Ramiro de Maeztu is a Spaniard and a journalist who has done the cause of the Allies much service by his writings in the press of his own country. In this book, the substance of which has appeared in the form of articles in the *New Age*, he discusses general questions of political theory raised by the war. His knowledge of European philosophical literature seems to be remarkably wide, and he shows a genuinely journalistic ability in turning the most various doctrines to the uses of his argument. He appears to be in general agreement with the Guild Socialism associated with the *New Age*, though there is little discussion of its economic side and none at all of its details. I think the book is very significant, both as a contribution to political thought and in the light it throws on the more recent developments of Socialist theory.

The basis of his political doctrine is the notion of function, but he draws from it conclusions quite different in some respects from those which have been traditionally associated with it. Practically it comes to this—he parts company with Plato and with all his modern followers like Hegel and Green by making the functional principle apply to the state itself as well as to the social groups or social institutions “within” it. This, of course, is a great deal more than merely to insist on the distinction between society and the state. It is common ground that society is the social whole. The difference is as to the state. For the traditional political doctrine the state is society regarded as a unit rightly exercising force on behalf of the best life. For Mr. de Maeztu it is only a particular organ of society charged with certain specific and limited functions—apparently chiefly the maintenance of order and the administration of justice. It has no necessary priority over the others and no authority outside

its own sphere. Like them, it is altogether subordinate to its function and its function to the thing it serves. This doctrine is not new as a criticism of the sovereignty of the state. In its general character it does not differ much from the ideas that historians like Maitland or Figgis have been working out. No doubt the historical material, mediæval or modern, controlling all these writers has a fundamental identity—the prominence, namely, with which appears the autonomy of the smaller—generally voluntary—group, whether this be the guild or the Teutonic community or the Church or a trade union. What mainly distinguishes Mr. de Maeztu is his attempt to relate his doctrines to very recent logical and ethical and juridical theories. He constantly acknowledges his debt to Husserl and Mr. G. E. Moore. The fundamental error which has haunted political theory is subjectivism, which imagines that goodness or right has an essential relation to some mind. The subjectivist view of law, *e.g.*, treats the location of the sovereignty in a state as the fundamental question, instead of discussing as it ought what the principles are which make the association possible. Objectivity is correlated with discharge of function: subjectivity is reference to autonomous will which need never lead beyond caprice and carries with it no guarantee of value.

This emphasis on the autonomous will gives Mr. de Maeztu the division of his criticism. To use as principle of explanation the will of the social group is the German heresy. The fundamental thing in social life is then the power that society possesses as a whole, and this is the state. From that follow sovereignty and the identification of good men with good citizens and patriots. With this Mr. de Maeztu connects the Hegelian tradition in English and German thought—I think he takes it right back to Kant—and as a species of it, Marxism. But it is also possible to pursue the same fundamental error in the opposite direction. Substitute the will of the isolated individual for that of the group and you have the principle of Liberty. Here Mr. de Maeztu has in mind the Philosophical Radicals and the whole Liberal tradition in England. He devotes a few chapters which reach a very high level of thinking to the political consequences of its hedonism. With it all he connects a most fascinating revival of the doctrine of original sin, obviously largely derived from Sorel. The real trouble, he argues in effect, is that people *will* believe in the goodness of human nature and think the universe friendly,

instead of looking with a decent Christian humility to the eternal values which lie beyond themselves.

The third section of the book is a discussion of function and values, and an attempt to indicate how society can be based on the functional principle. This applies both to internal and to international affairs. For just as no man has any subjective right to anything, so no state has any subjective right to govern a territory. The rights of states depend on the functions they perform in the development of human solidarity and the increase of values. The fact that there is at present no authority to enforce them is quite irrelevant. That a right is not realised does not affect its objectivity any more than a man's *de facto* legal possession of property shows that he performs any function which justifies him in it. Mr. de Maeztu follows Plato in finding the functional principle at work wherever there is a connected social life, and the attempt to organise life on this principle plainly depends on the growth of institutions corresponding to functions in the state and the self government of these, also on a functional basis. It is unnecessary to argue whether this is democracy. Mr. de Maeztu commonly calls it Syndicalism; he has in mind no more than a reference to what M. Lagardelle calls the "Socialism of Institutions," and this he takes rather differently from writers who have also been influenced by this side of the movement. He does not as I understand him pay much attention either to the autonomy of the corporate groups or to the division among them of the sovereignty of the formally unitary state. This brings him closer than he thinks to the idealist writers and also obscures his doctrine—if he has one—of liberty. Both points are, I think, worth brief discussion.

Mr. de Maeztu would hold that it is his doctrine of function and value that marks him out. This is not so. Idealist political theory has always insisted on function and correlated it with value; and it would agree largely with his criticism of authority and wholly with that of liberty. Further, it can be put in a form which protects it at least in the first instance from the charge of subjectivity. Value no doubt is a character which belongs only to conscious experience, but it is logically connected with objective features of that experience—its harmoniousness and comprehensiveness. In rejecting this latter doctrine Mr. de Maeztu agrees with Mr. G. E. Moore; and therefore his whole political theory lacks the attempt to place in an ordinal series the

different institutions of social life and to find in them all the one common general purpose differently realised in each, which the idealist calls the state. A divergence like this can be traced to disagreement on points of logical theory; but it implies also a fundamental difference in the content of the social experience used as material.

In the second place, Mr. de Maeztu's anxiety to dispose of the traditional English view of liberty and substitute for it "the primacy of things" brings him near to denying altogether its value. Formally, his doctrine is that values are fundamental and liberty only an instrumental end: even if we take the latter as participation in the government or citizenship (p. 239) it is not difficult to treat the realisation of this in particular individuals as a rather unimportant detail. I do not imagine that Mr. de Maeztu himself takes this view of it, but only that it would be easy for other people to do so on the pretext of maintaining the purity of his own doctrine. In this respect the case is parallel to that of the really characteristic German doctrine of nationality, which holds that the value of a nation is to be judged by its contribution to culture: for which the interesting corollary follows that since German culture is superior to that of other peoples it has a right to impose its culture and its nationality on them. Hence, *e.g.*, neither Polish nor Irish nationality can possibly matter. But the fact is that a nation is constituted primarily by its historical unity and its basis of common sentiment, and other nations should respect and encourage its desire to become autonomous, because only thus will it be possible for it to develop its peculiar contribution to culture. Nationality in fact is not merely an instrumental value; it is itself a source of values. The case is similar with political liberty, which is also a potential value, recognised because it will give birth to others.

The real defect of Mr. de Maeztu's view is, that having set its face sternly against romanticism and its pandering to human self-satisfaction, it has not remembered that values are after all realised in persons and that any general attempt to state what they are does not tell us who are their bearers, and cannot do so. And because this is so even in seeking not after the things which are seen but after those which are eternal we must depend in the first instance on the development and recognition of voluntary groups within society: for this is the principle of toleration and the source of all progress towards the desired end. Original sin

may be the essence of religion, but we must treat men as if they were made in the image of their Maker, lest peradventure their rulers who always imagine themselves the elect think themselves justified even in this world.

The significance of the book as a product of present-day socialist thought is that it may serve as an indication of the direction in which Syndicalism may develop itself as a theory. The conflict with the older (especially English) Collectivist doctrine may be taken as complete, and the agreement of Guild Socialism with several vigorous elements in recent political thought is no doubt one source of its strength, though whether the latter will always feel quite comfortable with its new ally is doubtful. On the other side, we are a long way from Marxism, and this is not altogether an advantage. No one probably could regard with much satisfaction the more recent orthodox Marxian political philosophers like Dietzgen and some of his American disciples with their use of all that is least intelligible in the Hegelian dialectic. But it is difficult to see why any doctrine should be called specifically socialist which neglects the class-struggle. This is a symptom of Mr. de Maeztu's difficulties in dealing with the historical. Similarly with his treatment of the economic interpretation of history. He asserts that the economic and military powers are identical and finds in the doctrine as the Marxists formulate it a confusion with the historical interpretation of economics. To say this is to confuse economic theory with economic conditions, a heresy which Marx himself could scarcely have understood, much less fallen into.

M. W. ROBIESON.

Belfast, Ireland.

CHRISTIANITY AND SEX PROBLEMS. By Hugh Northcote, M.A. Philadelphia: F. A. Davis and Company. (English Depot: Stanley Phillips, 23, Creighton Road, Queen's Park, London, N. W.) Second edition, revised and enlarged. Pp. xvi, 478. Price, 12s. 6d. net.

Mr. Northcote's book is a valuable contribution to the small number of those which deal with sex problems from a point of view at once definitely Christian and scientific. The spirit in which he approaches his subject is suggested in the following paragraph, where he comments on "the broad assertion" made by the Lambeth Conference of Bishops that "a life of chastity for